

**MINUTES  
CITY OF GREY FOREST, TEXAS  
GREY FOREST COMMUNITY CENTER  
18249 SHERWOOD TRAIL  
HELOTES, TX 78023  
April 26, 2022, 6:30 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Charles Thornton called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Charles M. Thornton Jr., Mayor Pro Tem Geri Poss, Council Member Jennifer Nottingham, Council Member Sean Skaggs, Council Member Susan Darst, and Council Member Kimberly Verity.

Staff Present: City Secretary Miguel Cantu, Assistant to the City Secretary Nichole Heinrich, Deputy Chief Frank Francis, SGT Scott Ristow, SGT Gary Russell, and City Engineer David Givler, Givler Engineering Inc.

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION**

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. PRESENTATIONS BY CITIZENS AND VISITORS**

Ms. Madeline McCloskey requested to address the City Council regarding the 60<sup>th</sup> City of Grey Forest Anniversary of Incorporation by thanking Mr. Cantu and Ms. Heinrich for their planning and execution of the event. Additionally, Ms. McCloskey asked that Mrs. Laura Chaffee be allowed to speak during the playground discussion (IX. Unfinished Business, b) discussion regarding the Grey Forest Community Center Playground).

Mrs. Laura Chaffee requested to address the City Council regarding the mailboxes. Mrs. Chaffee informed City Council that she and her family enjoyed the 60<sup>th</sup> City of Grey Forest Anniversary of Incorporation. She stated the mailboxes were not that noticeable and may only need to add a cover just like the bus stop for kids.

**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS / REPORTS / MAYOR AND CITY EMPLOYEES**

**a) Mayor Announcements**

**1) Financials**

Mayor Thornton presented the future financials and March 2022 Check Details. Mayor Thornton, for the record, stated no City funds were used in preparation for the 60<sup>th</sup> City of Grey Forest Anniversary of Incorporation. Mr. Cantu informed City Council that C6 Disposal Systems Inc. expense for garbage collection would increase by 5.6% for a temporary fuel charge. Mayor Thornton reported \$196,000 has been spent on the Scharf Case and is not \$1,000,000.

**b) Council/Staff Announcements:** Council Member Skaggs provided a document to City Council explaining the costs associated with the septic systems replaced at City Hall and the Grey Forest Community Center. He reminded City Council the amount budgeted in amount of \$20,000. He reported the city was able to defray costs when working on the aerobic system at City Hall that by using city employees, with the assistance of Grey Forest Utilities. The project was completed at a cost of \$10,092.02. With the remaining \$20,000, they used it to work on the Grey Forest Community Center septic system. He informed City Council the only remaining detail was to have the system inspected by the engineer. The cost reduction was because he was able to use city staff assistance and Grey Forest Utilities to complete the work. Council Member Skaggs concluded that he wanted to inform City Council the funds spent were not

“crazy”, the decisions to repair the septic were done as best as could be. Council Member Verity stated that she was concerned with the projects because they are in the floodplain. Council Member Skaggs responded that he was aware of projects and the engineer specifically designed the septic system to accommodate the floodplain. Mayor Thornton added that the original septic system did not have a permit at the location; however, Bexar County Environmental had approved the plan and the city is waiting for the engineer inspection.

Council Member Nottingham announced she would provide an update on the Guajalote Ranch project. She informed City Council they had created a steering committee that included Ms. Susan Bevin. They have discussed their concerns with the City of San Antonio and were directed to Bexar County Planning. The steering committee would like to see Guajalote Ranch into conservation and not as a developed area.

**c) Committee Announcements/Reports:** None

**d) Grey Forest Community Board Update:** None

**e) Senator Frank L. Madla Natural Area Update:** Council Member Nottingham reported that the annual inspection by Edwards Aquifer has been performed on Madla Park and passed the inspection. Also, there are still visitors to the park still walking in the meadow so additional tape has been added. She also reported that the entrance signs were taken down to be refurbished.

**f) Board of Adjustment Update:** None

**g) Police Department Monthly Report:** SGT Ristow reviewed the Police Department report for March 2022. Deputy Chief Francis reported that the City of Grey Forest was audited by the Department of Public Safety, Criminal Justice Information Services Division and received a very positive review. He explained that usually it takes an auditor almost two hours to perform the audit; however, with the City of Grey Forest Police Department the time was 45 minutes.

**h) Public Works Monthly Report:** None

**i) Fire Department Monthly Report:** Bexar County Emergency Services District 8 Firefighter Devin Salazar provided a report for City Council review.

**j) Grey Forest Utilities Update:** Mayor Thornton informed City Council GFU would be holding its meeting.

## **VI. PUBLIC HEARING**

a) None

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MAY BE CONSIDERED AT ANY TIME DURING THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING:**

## **VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

**a) Approval of Minutes: March 22, 2022 Regular Meeting**

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER NOTTINGHAM TO APPROVE THE MARCH 22, 2022 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. MAYOR PRO TEM POSS SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**a) Discuss and take possible action on appointment of Reserve Officer: Juan Morin and Augustine Valdez.**

Deputy Chief Frank Francis presented Mr. Juan Morin and Augustine Valdez to City Council for approval as City of Grey Forest Reserve Officers.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MAYOR PRO TEM POSS TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF JUAN MORIN AND AUGUSTINE VALDEZ AS RESERVE OFFICERS. COUNCIL MEMBER DARST SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

*Mayor Thornton moved agenda item IX. Unfinished Business, b) Discussion regarding the Grey Forest Community Center Playground.*

**IX. \* Unfinished Business, b) Discussion regarding the Grey Forest Community Center**

**Playground.**

Mayor Thornton introduced Mr. David Givler, Givler Engineering Inc. to discuss the Grey Forest Community Center Playground. Mr. Givler understands the playground was being built with the best intentions he also understands that the playground may have not been insurable and hit a snag that caused the stop of the construction of the playground. Mayor Thornton explained that his understanding is the playground equipment required that the equipment utilized as a playground would be specifically designed to be used as playground equipment. Mr. Givler stated that usually the process starts with a committee that meets with an engineer or an architect to help work on the project; however, in this case the City Engineer is coming in the middle of the project and makes it more difficult to the design process. Mr. Givler informed City Council that he would gladly help the city with this playground project but asked that the city not place his firm in a bidding war which would cause a mark on his license. Mayor Thornton allowed Mrs. Laura Chaffee to speak. Mrs. Chaffee provided an overview of her work on the playground. She explained that she had been working with an architect that resided in the city but would gladly share the plans with Mr. Givler in order for him to assist with the final design. She stated that she was unaware the City had an engineer. Mayor Thornton stated that he felt it would probably be best that Mr. Givler, Mrs. Chaffee, and Council Member Skaggs start the discussion to do an evaluation and planning of the park. A meeting between Mr. Givler, Mrs. Chaffee, and Council Member Skaggs will be scheduled in early June, since Mrs. Chaffee would be out of during the month of May.

- b) Discuss the status of the Interlocal Agreement for Police, Fire, and EMS Dispatch Service between the City of Grey Forest and the City of Helotes ("Agreement") and consider authorizing the Mayor to negotiate an extension of the Agreement with Helotes and/or negotiate an agreement with Bexar County for the provision of Emergency and Non-Emergency Dispatch Services for the City of Grey Forest.**

Mayor Thornton stated he visited with City of Helotes Mayor Rich Whitehead. During the meeting he learned that the costs for dispatch service would increase for the City of Grey Forest because the City of Helotes was operating in a deficit and City of Helotes may have to shut down their dispatch services. Mayor Thornton informed City Council that if the City of Helotes shuts down, then his understanding, by law, Bexar County Dispatch would be required to provide dispatch services to the City of Grey Forest; however, with the amount of calls the City of Helotes is generating Bexar County Dispatch might not be able to provide dispatch services to their city. Additionally, Mayor Thornton informed City Council the agreement between the City of Grey Forest and the City of Helotes would expire in May 2022. According to Chief Rodriguez (not present), Mayor Thornton stated, if the city contracts with Bexar County Dispatch it would cost the city approximately \$14,000. Mayor Thornton informed City Council that this agenda item was to allow the Mayor to start working out the details of dispatch services, not make a decision, but in fact find and return with some recommendations to the City Council. Council Member Darst stated what City Council needed to do is take care of its residents; however, she understood that the City of Helotes may be asking a lot from Bexar County in order to continue to function and the details were discussed at the last City of Helotes City Council meeting. Bexar County ESD #8 Devin Salazar reported that the fire station has been with Bexar County Dispatch since 2012 and have had great success; however, they were with the City of Helotes, but Bexar County dispatched faster than the City of Helotes. Mayor Thornton stated that there would be some changes in the future with Bexar County Dispatch and City of Helotes Dispatch because technology is changing, and the City of Grey Forest would have to incur some costs associated with the changes.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY MAYOR PRO TEM POSS AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO NEGOTIATE AN EXENTION OF THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR POLICE, FIRE, AND EMS DISPATCH SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF HELOTES AND/OR**

NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT WITH BEXAR COUNTY FOR THE PROVISION OF EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY DISPATCH SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF GREY FOREST. COUNCIL MEMBER DARST SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

- c) **Discuss and consider authorizing the re-appointment of Dr. Chichi Junda Woo as the Health Authority for the City of Grey Forest and authorizing the Mayor to sign the Certificate of Appointment designating Dr. Chichi Junda Woo as the Health Authority for the City and an Interlocal Agreement for Designation of Health Authority between the City of Grey Forest and City of San Antonio.**

Mayor Thornton announced that this was a contract the City has passed. This interlocal agreement allows the Dr. Woo to be the Health Authority during a pandemic situation.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VERITY TO AUTHORIZE THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF DR. CHICHI JUNDA WOO AS THE HEALTH AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY OF GREY FOREST AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT DESIGNATING DR. CHICHI JUNDA WOO AS THE HEALTH AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY AND AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR DESIGNATION OF HEALTH AUTHORITY BETWEEN THE CITY OF GREY FOREST AND CITY OF SAN ANTONIO. COUNCIL MEMBER DARST SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

- d) **Discuss and consider appointing a person to represent the City of Grey Forest during discussions of any regulating authority with jurisdiction related to the development of the Guajalote Ranch Tract Project.**

Council Member Nottingham stated she would like to speak about this agenda item. Council Member Nottingham reported she had been attending the Guajalote Ranch Project meetings regularly along with Ms. Susan Beavins. She reminded City Council she would no longer be on City Council but felt it was important to continue attending the meetings because the City of Grey Forest would be impacted if the project was allowed to proceed. Council Member Verity stated she felt the representative should be a City Council Member. Council Member Nottingham responded she understood a City Council representative should be in the position; however, she is presenting the information to City Council to make sure the City Council is kept informed. Mayor Thornton stated that this appointed person would not have the authority to negotiate anything, they would respond with what they feel the City agrees or disagrees with. Mayor Pro Tem Poss asked why an individual could not be appointed to a committee and report to the City Council. Mayor Thornton responded that what they would do is attend the meetings and report to City Council. He also mentioned that Council Member Nottingham is very passionate about the project and has attended every meeting along with Ms. Beavins. A resolution should be created, responded Council Member Verity, setting the guidelines for the committee. Mayor Thornton agreed that a committee should be informed with parameters as to what the committee can do. The committee should also keep the Mayor informed about meetings and if their attendance to the meeting would be valuable. Council Member Nottingham asked if the conversation would make it formal. Mayor Thornton stated City Attorney Ryan Henry's office would create a resolution and bring it back to City Council at the next meeting.

- e) **Discuss and consider possible updates to the current Grey Forest Policies, Procedures, and Rules of Order for City Council Meetings to address:**
- a) **conditions when the mayor must inform the council about changes to city buildings and infrastructure,**
  - b) **conditions when the Mayor must inform council after taking certain employment actions, and**
  - c) **conditions when the Mayor must seek council approval for certain**

**expenditures regardless of amounts.**

**(Council Member Verity and Council Member Darst)**

Council member Verity asked to speak to the agenda item. She stated some changes have been made in the City and the work was donated. This would include donated paving materials and the City has no way of tracking the work. Council Member Verity stated the community is fixated on preserving and maintaining what it currently has. Aesthetics are so important, and many citizens do not want anything to change. She felt it was very important that City Council is aware of the changes made to buildings, anything visual, or physical changes to the community. Additionally, Council Member Verity stated that she felt it was important to address the Mayor taking certain employment actions such as terminations. Mayor Thornton reminded City Council the Mayor can terminate employees except the City Secretary and the Chief of Police regarding the conditions of when the Mayor must seek City Council approval on certain expenditures regardless of amounts, Council Member who felt it was aligned with (a) changes to buildings and infrastructure. Mayor Thornton stated that the City Council adopts a budget and the Mayor decides to spend the approved budget item, then the item was originally approved. Council Member Darst responded that in the City of Helotes if an item costs over \$15,000 then the item must be approved by City Council for purchase. Council Member Verity felt there should be some policy in place that if the change is a physical change to surfaces, buildings, infrastructure then the item should be presented to City Council to be informed of the change. Likewise, she stated the City should preserve the Mayor's ability to continue the day-to-day operations of the City so it runs smoothly and effectively. The City does not want for the day-to-day operations to be stalled while waiting for the next City Council Meeting. She also does not want to put the City in a position where City Council is having to convene for special meetings every time the Mayor needs to make an administrative decision. Mayor Thornton stated it would be on the next City Council agenda with a resolution, setting the parameters, and the appointment of members. Mayor Thornton stated he would get with City Attorney Ryan Henry to create an ordinance regarding the Mayor being required to report the aesthetics of the city buildings/surfaces and also employment actions.

**f) Discuss and take possible action on pay increase(s) for Municipal Judge and Municipal Court Prosecutor Pay.**

Council Member Verity asked why this discussion topic was not being discussed during budget time. Mayor Thornton stated that this was a request from the City Prosecutor Darrell Dullnig and the Mayor asked City Attorney Henry to find out what the average pay for Municipal Judges and Prosecutors are in the area. City Attorney Henry stated that the pay was very low for the Municipal Judge and the Municipal Court Prosecutor. Mayor Thornton provided a comparison report with the pay of the judge and prosecutors from surrounding cities to the City Council. Council Member Darst responded that these types of reports are usually considered during the budget season and cycle. Mayor Pro Tem Poss stated that City Council should be made aware if there's a chance to potentially lose an employee, but the City will begin to review its budget in three months. City Council would like to review this during the preparation of the 2022-2023 budget year.

NO ACTION.

**g) Discuss and take possible action on pay increase for Police Officer Gary Russell and Police Officer Scott Ristow.**

Mayor Thornton stated that SGT Russell and SGT Ristow have taken on additional duties and have quite a few reports to do. Mayor Thornton felt that the officers deserved a pay increase; additionally, he understands during the budget cycle, only cost of living increases are given and not a pay increase. Council Members informed the Mayor this could be done during that time. Council Member Verity stated that the different department heads should have some say when a pay increase arises when employees are taking on additional responsibilities. Mayor Pro Tem Poss added that there should be some documentation

provided and inform City Council in order to get a cost of living and a pay increase. Council Member Nottingham remarked that if the merit increase is being considered for the officers, then City Council should consider an increase for all employees. Mayor Thornton informed City Council it was up to them to decide; however, he reported that SGT Russell and SGT Scott worked during the weekend, and they receive compensation time. Council Member Darst stated the City would have to pay the compensation time when they left. Mayor Thornton informed City Council it did not; however, Council Member Darst stated that compensation time had been paid in the past. Additionally, Council Member Darst added that she now understands the City has ARPA Funds available and she is for paying premium pay if per chance they qualify for the funds. Council Member Nottingham stated she would like to see a priority list for the ARPA Funds that included the officers. Council Member Verity stated she did like Council Member Nottingham's ideas about allocating and prioritizing projects for the ARPA funds and hold a special meeting to discuss COVID pay. NO ACTION.

#### **IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**a) Discuss and consider mailbox cover design.**

Mayor Thornton proposed the idea to place a metal cover over the mailboxes, use the lights currently located at the mailboxes under the cover, and embellish it at a later time to cover the metal posts.

No Action.

**b) \* AGENDA ITEM MOVED: Discussion regarding the Grey Forest Community Center Playground.**

**c) Discuss and take possible action on Ordinance 2022-02-13, an ordinance of the City of Grey Forest, Texas amending the City Code of Ordinances Chapter 3 Building Regulations, section 3.01.002 fences, trees, etc., adjacent to street to add line of sight regulations to ensure public safety; providing a cumulative clause, a severability clause, and an effective date.**

Mr. Cantu reminded City Council the item was brought back because Council wanted to see how the ordinance would affect the City. Council Member Verity stated she has walked the City and there is no way a line of sight could be put into place especially with so many curves in the City. Mayor Thornton informed City Council this item had been reviewed at a previous City Council meeting and the result was to place stop signs throughout the City. Council Member Nottingham stated this has not been a huge issue in the City; however, there were some events such as a young girl learning how to drive, and an accident occurred. Mayor Thornton recalled seeing 4-wheelers speeding through the City and later saw some police vehicle lights. Concerned, he went to the sight and noticed that someone hit a deer. He believes the issue is speeding through the City and residents disregarding the stop signs. Council Member Skaggs asked if there would be any action on the agenda item. Mayor Thornton responded that there would not be. Council Member Darst stated she would like to have the City Inspector inspect the fence as part of the permitting process. While the inspection is being performed the inspector could identify any dangers to pedestrians or any safety concerns. Council Member Verity suggested that an inspection of the fences should be performed. Mayor Thornton stated that no action would be taken; however, an inspection would be added to the fence permitting at a City Council meeting.

**d) Discussion regarding pending City Council topics:**

**1) Website:** Mr. Cantu reported that the website was provided; however, it was returned for some changes.

**2) Road Repair**

**X. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The City Council did not convene into executive session.

- a) **City Council will receive an update from the City Attorney regarding the status of the Scharf v. City of Grey Forest litigation pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with legal counsel).**

No action

**XI. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS REQUESTED**

- a) Council Member Nottingham suggested the City Attorney to return with the Subdivision Ordinance and City staff would bring back the permitting process for fence permitting that would include consideration for floodplain.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**


MOTION WAS MADE BY MAYOR PRO TEM POSS TO ADJOURN AT 9:16 P.M.  
COUNCIL MEMBER SKAGGS SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 24TH DAY OF MAY 2022.

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Amanda Waldrop  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Miguel Cantu, TRMC  
City Secretary

